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Viewing cable 09KABUL4070, THE NEW CABINET: BETTER BUT NOT BEST

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
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Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09KABUL4070**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL4070	2009-12-19 16:21	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.aftenposten.no/spesial/wikileaksdokumenter/article3992521.ece>

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VZCZCXRO1101
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHBUL #4070/01 3531621
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 191621Z DEC 09 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4178
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 004070

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 12/19/2019
TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF
SUBJECT: THE NEW CABINET: BETTER BUT NOT BEST

Classified By: Ambassador Ricciardone reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).
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11. (C) Summary: President Karzai sent most of the cabinet list to the Parliament on December 19 with the notable exception of National Directorate of Security.

12. (U) First Vice President Fahim Khan announced the following list at the Parliament on December 19: REMAINING:
--Defense - Abdul Rahim Wardak. --Interior - Mohammad Hanif Atmar. --Finance - Mohammad Omer Zakhiwal. --Communication - Engineer Amirzai Sangi
REPLACEMENTS:
--Economy - Dr. Anwari Al-Haq Ahadi. --Culture - Sayed Makhdam Raheem. --Higher Education - Obaidullah Obaid. --Commerce - Ghulam Mohammad Elaq
NOT ANNOUNCED:
--Foreign Affairs --NDS --Urban Development

Analysis: We Can Work With Most

13. (C) The following list includes some background information on each of the selections, to include which political powerbroker supported the selections.

REMAINING:
--Defense - Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak (Pashtun). He was a mujahadeen commander during the Soviet occupation, and later spent over two decades in the United States.
--Interior - Mohammad Hanif Atmar (Pashtun). He earned his Master's degree in International Relations and Post-war Development from York University.
--Finance - Mohammad Omer Zakhiwal (Pashtun). He has Canadian citizenship, and most think he is willing to renounce his citizenship if the Afghan government branch. He is close to President Karzai and raised funds for him during the campaign, at times using methods that are not illegal but questionable.
--Communication - Engineer Amirzai Sangi (Pashtun). He earned his Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communications from the Southern Ontario Institute of Technology.
--Justice - Sarwar Danish (Hazara). He is a prolific writer and has published fifteen books on Islamic Jurisprudence, and other legal issues. He is a former judge.
--Education - Ghulam Farooq Wardak (Pashtun). We consider him an effective minister. However, the press reported widely that he misused his position to enrich himself.
--Water and Energy - Al-Haj Mohammad Ismail Khan (Tajik). This former warlord is known for his corruption and ineffectiveness at the Energy Ministry.
--Women's Affairs - Hosun Bano Ghazanfar (Uzbek). She was supported by the primarily Uzbek Junbesh political party, although they admitted that she was not qualified.
--Public Health - Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie (Pashtun). He is a former doctor and enjoys the support of Upper House Speaker Mojaddedi, and the former Minister of Health.
--Agriculture - Asif Rahimi (Tajik). We find him articulate and competent, but that he does not always deliver on his ambitious goals. He oversaw the privatization of the agricultural sector.
--Parliamentary Affairs - Mohammad Anwar Jekdalek (Pashtun). He obtained this position due to his close personal relationship with President Karzai.
--Counternarcotics - Gen. Khodaidad (Hazara) will remain for now, although Presidential Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai told Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone that he was not qualified.
ministries. He holds graduate degrees from the Indian National Defense Academy. He has been a very good partner for U.S. counternarcotics efforts.

REPLACEMENTS:
--Economy - Dr. Anwari Al-Haq Ahadi (Pashtun). He was the Finance Minister and remains the head of the pro-Pashtun Afghan Millat party. He married a U.S. citizen.
--Culture - Sayed Makhdam Raheem (Tajik). His family is associated with Zahir Shah. Many MPs claim he is too liberal after he was caught on television drinking.
--Higher Education - Former Kabul University Medical School Chancellor Obaidullah Obaid (Tajik). Supported by Marshall Fahim. Reportedly competent.
--Commerce - Ghulam Mohammad Elaqi (Hazara). He was the Central Bank Chairman in the 1990s, and former Chamber of Commerce President until 2008.
--Transportation - Dr. Mohammadullah Batash (Uzbek). He was previously the Junbesh Party Chairman, and was one of the four names the Junbesh party put forward for the position.
--Haji & Islamic Affairs - Enayatullah Baligh (Tajik). He is from Kapisa and is an influential prayer leader at Kabul's main mosque. He was a former member of the National Assembly.
--Public Works - Engineer Mirza Hussain Abdullahi. He obtained his PhD in Engineering at the University of Hawaii. He is beholden to Khalili, and the former Minister of Public Works.
--Mining - Wahidullah Shahrani (Uzbek). He is the former Minister of Commerce, and his family is from Badakhshan. We consider him one of the most qualified.
--Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) - Wais Barmak (Tajik). He is currently the deputy in this ministry, and is associated with Marshall Fahim.
--Labor and Social Affairs - Mohammad Ismail Munshi (Turkmen). He is one of the Deputy Chairmen of the Junbesh party. He is associated with Doszhanov.
--Border and Tribal Affairs - Hamid Gailani (Pashtun). He is a moderate Pashtun and currently is the Deputy Speaker of the Upper House of the Afghan Parliament.
--Refugees - Enayatullah Nazeri (Tajik). He is from Parwan Province and studied law and political science at the Kabul University. He was a respected civil servant and is viewed as relatively apolitical.

NOT ANNOUNCED

14. (C) President Karzai has made no announcement about his advisors, his Chief of Staff, the Foreign Affairs Minister, NDS, the OAA, the Independent Commission on Corruption, or the National Directorate of Security.

15. (C) It was unusual that NDS Saleh was not announced with the others, as both Karzai and his Chief of Staff have told us on numerous occasions that he was not qualified.

16. (C) The Parliament debated extensively whether or not President Karzai had the right to divide, add, or change Ministries without their approval.

Analysis: Political Debts and Balance

17. (C) Of the selections announced to date, 13 of the 24 are holdovers. Former President Rabbani was engaged in intensive negotiations with Karzai to return to the government.

18. (C) The biggest initial winners include first Vice President Fahim, who delivered significant numbers of Tajik voters and according to our EIKENBERRY